

Guidelines for Minimizing the Risks of Personal Liability

Individual responsibility

1. Attend board meetings whenever you are reasonably able to do so.
2. Read the minutes of board meetings.
3. Ask that all reports be written and circulated or given orally at board meetings.
4. Be familiar with your organization's purpose, objectives, goals and programs.
5. Satisfy yourself that the organization is fulfilling the requirements of its bylaws and those of your state.
6. Ensure the organization's affairs are being managed in a manner consistent with its mission and mandate as stated in the articles of incorporation.
7. Be certain that you are a member of the organization as outlined in the bylaws.
8. Avoid any conflict of interest or any appearance of personal gain.

Financial responsibility

9. Become familiar with your organization's finances, including the budget and budget process.
10. Know who is authorized to sign checks and for what amount.
11. Be sure your organization's books are audited on an annual basis by a reputable firm of chartered public accountants.

Ensure that staff income and payroll taxes are withheld and submitted to appropriate state tax and revenue agency

In case of closure of the organization, directors may be liable for employee wages if the organization has not paid them. This is an important consideration in planning the closure of an organization.

Responsibility for organizational policies

12. Be certain that policies are written in a clear and unambiguous manner and are acted on.
13. Insist that there are clear personnel policies, including job descriptions and annual staff evaluations.
14. Insist that nomination and membership procedures set out in the bylaws are followed.
15. Be sure your organization has a policy on volunteer responsibility, authority, and eligibility.
16. Question all matters concerning policy and practice.

Responsibility for public profile

17. Discover how the organization is viewed in the community. Scrutinize and monitor any publications put out by the organization.